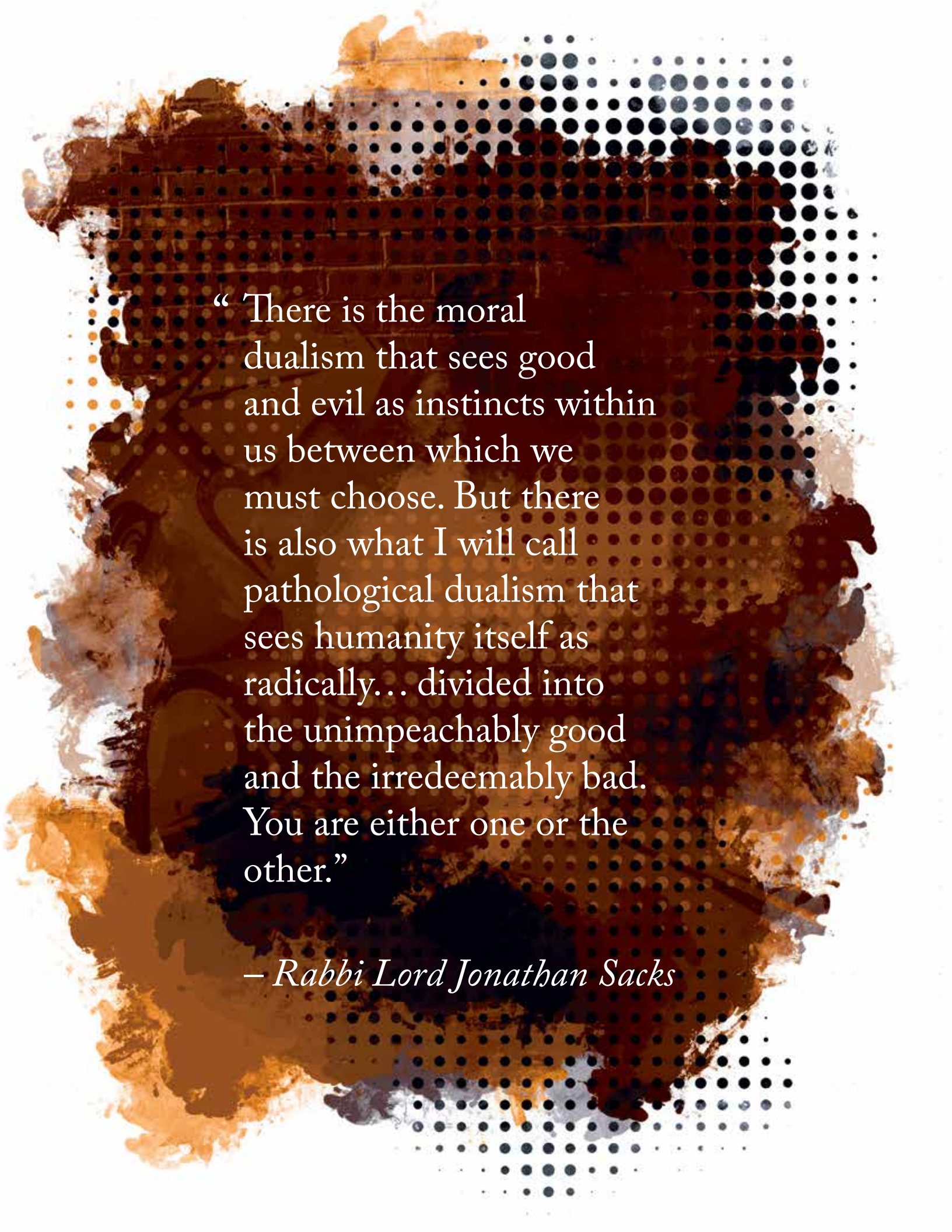


# Critical Social Justice in Tennessee Higher Education: An Overview



“ There is the moral dualism that sees good and evil as instincts within us between which we must choose. But there is also what I will call pathological dualism that sees humanity itself as radically... divided into the unimpeachably good and the irredeemably bad. You are either one or the other.”

– *Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A particularly narrow ideological view—Critical Social Justice (CSJ), as we call it—has come to dominate many American colleges and universities. This pernicious ideology divides the world into aggrieved minorities and oppressive majorities. It reduces people to a group identity grounded in immutable characteristics such as race and sex.

This narrow ideological view is diverting universities away from their core mission toward a mission of leftist activism. It is also working to undermine the American way of life. It undermines equal protection of the law—creating different standards of justice for minorities and the supposedly oppressive majority. It cultivates anger and resentment among the supposedly aggrieved, while undermining the stability and mutual toleration at the heart of a decent, stable civil society. It compromises meritocracy. It compromises free speech, and it compromises open inquiry because it limits the range of acceptable opinions.

Many of Tennessee’s universities and state colleges are dedicating themselves to this ideology. University of Tennessee – Knoxville has more administrators dedicated to CSJ than the rest of the system combined, but CSJ ideology presents a systemic problem. More administrators are added every year. More strategic plans include goals about promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). More colleges and schools within the universities themselves adopt diversity statements and plans to expand this infrastructure. This overview shows this in several ways.

- All of Tennessee’s eleven universities have university-level administrators dedicated to promoting DEI.
- Four of Tennessee’s eleven universities have university-level strategic plans for promoting DEI.
- At least four of Tennessee’s eleven universities have dedicated DEI administrators at the college-level.
- At least eight of Tennessee’s eleven universities have dedicated DEI plans or DEI committees to promote this narrow ideological mission at the college level.

The DEI problem is systemic. More energy and resources are dedicated to promoting DEI at UTK than all the other schools combined. However, the energy is building at several other schools, including most prominently University of Tennessee Health Science Center, East Tennessee State University and the University of Memphis. Reform is unlikely to occur from within these universities. Targeted action through the state legislature can however force change - including through budgetary and administrative reforms.

# PUBLIC POLICY REFORMS

**Budget.** The legislature controls the purse strings. It should consider cutting budgets throughout the Tennessee system by amounts of spending on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to get universities to change direction.

**Budget Reporting.** The legislature should order universities to return to their core educational mission and they should be required to report how they have cut budgets so the legislature can judge whether they have been returned to that mission.

**Budget Formula.** Universities that promote DEI should be disfavored in the system's budget formula, while those that refuse to adopt this pernicious ideology should be rewarded.

**Hiring Practices.** Universities are public entities. The legislature should require universities to emphasize excellence, professionalism, and contributions to the core educational mission instead of diversity in their hiring. Practices inconsistent with hiring for excellence and professionalism and the core mission should be proscribed.

**Transparency.** All faculty members and administrators should post their vitas online, updated twice a year, and all course syllabi should be available to the public online. The public has a right to know what its universities are teaching.

**Governance.** Trustees and Regents must have annual reports on how the universities are rolling back the DEI infrastructures and policies and emphasize merit in hiring. Strategic Plans will not be approved if they emphasize diversity and inclusion and fail to emphasize race-neutral ideas of excellence, professionalism, and the core educational mission.

**Bans on Activism.** The legislature should commission a study on university sponsored political activism with an aim of determining which departments, colleges, and policies foster activism so that the scale of the problem can be better grasped. This will be a basis for future legislative concerns.

# WHAT IS CRITICAL SOCIAL JUSTICE?

## HOW DOES IT RELATE TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) PROGRAMMING?

### **America's colleges and universities have become increasingly radical over the past 50 years. <sup>1</sup>**

Academics and administrators are no longer merely pushing progressive politics but transforming universities into institutions dedicated to political activism and indoctrinating students into a hateful ideology. We call this ideological bent, Critical Social Justice. <sup>2</sup>

Many today are worried about critical race theory (CRT),<sup>3</sup> critical theory, cultural Marxism,<sup>4</sup> identity politics, and multiculturalism.<sup>5</sup> These are all basically the same ways of thinking. They all adopt a reigning civil rights ideology, which generally holds that all disparities in group outcomes are traceable to discrimination and would disappear through genuine liberation.<sup>6</sup>

CSJ begins with criticism or critical analysis, where activists unmask the supposed hidden realities of the world. America, they say, seems to be a place of equal opportunity or fair admissions, but it really is made up of various structures of oppression built by the privileged to keep victim groups weak and unequal. Under this ideology, America is said to have a patriarchal, racist, Christian, homophobic, cisgendered, and ableist culture. The “advantaged” America tries to impose its ways on allegedly disadvantaged Americans. The alleged oppressors, CSJ proponents argue, do this in sneaky ways, like passing seemingly colorblind laws or having colorblind admission standards at universities that actually exclude minorities.<sup>7</sup> America and all of the West are everywhere and always racist, sexist, etc. — that is the conclusion of the CSJ activists.

But activists promise a CSJ remedy to this problem. Victims, they believe, should be elevated and the supposedly privileged, demoted. This remedy is realized differently in different institutional settings. At universities specifically, students' minds will be retrained. They will be taught to identify, shame, and destroy “oppressors.” Activists will teach oppressors to identify with the plight of victims and remediate activism on victims' behalf, while they encourage supposed oppressors to feel shame for their “whiteness” or “toxic masculinity.” Two sets of standards — one for the alleged oppressors and one for the alleged victims — emerge.

The result of such training will be a happier, more diverse student body and an environment defined by perceived inclusion. Or so we are told. But this happy vision never comes about because the CSJ activists continually identify lingering inequalities that they say must be removed before the promised land arrives. It sets about a rolling revolution in university life, where one reform always demands another. Resentment and hatred between the alleged victims and alleged oppressors reign in the meantime.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is the mechanism whereby CSJ is applied to institutions like universities. DEI is CSJ made more palatable using sweet-sounding civic language, but the related policies represent the same

critical analysis and remedy. Both CSJ and DEI emphasize how institutions like universities are irredeemably racist or sexist. Both CSJ and DEI hope for policies that might overturn the victim-oppressor framework, but instead they make the former victims the new rulers and the former oppressors the new victims.

As famous critical race theorist Ibram X. Kendi writes, “The only remedy for past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy for present discrimination is future discrimination.”<sup>8</sup> DEI is that present and future discrimination:

**Diversity:** Diversity used to mean difference or plurality but not anymore. Diversity means more members of victim groups and fewer members of the supposedly oppressive groups. When men make up 80% of engineering students, that is a lack of diversity that must be remedied. When women make up more than 80% of elementary education majors, that is diversity that should be celebrated. And in curriculum, diversity means replacing books written by white males with authors from “historically underrepresented” groups. The achievement of diversity requires retribution be taken against former oppressors. It requires that aggrieved minorities be held to lower standards than those who are privileged. The formerly marginalized get privilege, and the formerly privileged get marginalized.

**Equity:** Equity used to mean fairness before the law but not anymore. Equity stands for the idea that universities must aim at something like statistical group parity (e.g., since blacks make up 13% of the population, they should be 13% of engineers). Failure to achieve parity is sufficient evidence of systematic discrimination. Therefore, we must dismantle the old culture (no matter how well it seemed to work) and build a new one that will achieve parity. In short, equity is equal group outcomes.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion used to mean everyone was welcome but not anymore. Today’s inclusion demands an institutional climate that elevates and supports the well-being of aggrieved minorities instead or at the expense of the supposedly privileged. Sometimes that means special tutoring for their supposedly unique needs like a women’s center or excluding ideas and symbols that some members of underrepresented groups find objectionable like thin blue line flags). LGBT- or Blacks-only graduations are organized in the name of inclusion. Speech codes and safe spaces arise in order to accomplish this new inclusion. In short, inclusion means excluding all that makes allegedly aggrieved minorities uncomfortable.

The ideas behind DEI require people to believe that America is on an endless treadmill of oppression and victimhood. Accordingly, all efforts to transcend group identity are thought to be lies that rationalize “privilege.” Advocates for CSJ demand ideological conformity — victims can only be seen as members of an oppressed class rather than individuals, and non-victims are stigmatized and blamed for the evils victims suffer.

CSJ education undermines freedom under the guise of equal laws and social harmony.<sup>9</sup> It is inconsistent with the idea that individual rights should help organize political life. It is inconsistent with a dedication to scientific inquiry. There is no way to get from CSJ to a peaceful, unified, and happy nation. It also compromises family life. It promises to tarnish and alienate productive, law-abiding citizens who do not espouse CSJ philosophy both in theory and in practice. It denies there is a standard outside of group identity to which groups can be held. It denies

the reality that inequality and privilege are complex social phenomena that come about in many different ways, not just from oppression. It is every bit as deadly to the American way of life as selling state secrets to a public enemy. CSJ is false and pernicious.

Others have written about the problems endemic to CSJ. This report is based on the idea that CSJ undermines the advancement of knowledge and the achievement of a common good. It asks:

**How far has the CSJ agenda advanced across Tennessee's institutions of higher education?**





# ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL UNIVERSITIES

What follows is an analysis of individual universities. This analysis looks at publicly available information. It yields a very conservative estimate for how far DEI has penetrated individual universities. We do not analyze syllabi, for instance, for individual classes or individual departments. Nor do we describe the programs being implemented. We have not looked at the academic records of administrators or faculty at the universities. Such questions would reveal an even more systemic problem. We can begin to reveal how far DEI has spread through a simpler set of questions.

**Does the university have a university-wide strategic plan for DEI?**

**Does university strategic plan have an objective dedicated to DEI?**

**Does the university have a designated university level administrator for DEI?**

**What proportion of colleges have DEI administrators?**

**What proportion of colleges have DEI strategic plans or committees?**

**Does the university have required diversity courses in general education? How many credits?**

Fully-built out DEI missions require some bureaucratic infrastructure. Universities decide to build that infrastructure. Then universities hire people to do further building. And then those administrators coordinate the actions of those who also want to build further. They plan together. And, at the end of the process, they execute their plans into every academic unit and into student life and into every nook and cranny of the university. Our case study on how CSJ came to University of Tennessee – Knoxville bears out this pattern, but it is a pattern that is developing in several universities across the system.

We provide a scorecard of sorts for each university to show where they are in this process, along with a footnote apparatus that carefully documents where the information is from. Scorecards could estimate how much DEI costs at each university as well, using the publicly available roster of public employee salaries. But this has proven difficult. This method is inaccurate in that it ignores stipends that faculty members get to remake their syllabi to conform to the demands of CSJ or what faculty members receive for serving on committees or buyouts for committee service. A more accurate total would depend on universities releasing data that they have proven very unwilling to release through FOIA requests. We start with a handy chart depicting how much each university has built its DEI infrastructure before turning to individual university scorecards.

# AT A GLANCE: CRITICAL SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This chart presents how far universities in the Tennessee higher education system have built out DEI infrastructure. Each university is then analyzed individually in the pages that follow.

UNIVERSITY	DEI PLAN	STRAT PLAN	U ADM	COLL DEI	COLL PLAN	DIV REQ
UT-KNOX	Yes	Yes	Yes	9/11	11/11	9
UT-HC		Yes	Yes	2/5	5/5	0
ETSU	Yes		Yes	3/8	5/8	0
MEMPHIS		Yes	Yes	0/12	6/12	0
APSU		Yes	Yes	0/5	5/5	0
UT-C	Yes		Yes	1/4	1/4	6
TTU			Yes	3/8	8/8	0
MTSU			Yes	2/6	0/6	0
UT-M			Yes	0/5	1/5	0
TSU	Yes		Yes	0/7	0/7	0
UTS			Yes	0/6	0/6	1

**DEI Plan = Does the university have a university-wide strategic plan for DEI?**

**Strat Plan = Does university strategic plan have an objective dedicated to DEI?**

**U Adm = Does the university have a designated university level administrator for DEI?**

**Coll DEI = What proportion of colleges have DEI administrators?**

**Coll Plan = What proportion of colleges have DEI strategic plans or committees?**

**Div Req = Does the university have required diversity courses in general education? How many credits?**

## University of Tennessee at Knoxville

UTK has remarkably gone from almost no DEI infrastructure in 2018 to a fully built-out DEI infrastructure in the span of 4 years. It has significant plans to spread this narrow ideology into all corners of the university. We have prepared a case study revealing how UTK went woke as a cautionary tale for what is happening at other universities across the Tennessee system.

Key Document:            Report on Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty.  
                                  Envisioning the Future of University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Associate Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Engagement: Tyvi Small.

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

Herbert College of Agriculture: Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion: Sharon Couch.

College of Architecture and Design: Director of Diversity Relations: Felicia Dean.

College of Arts and Sciences: Associate Dean of Diversity and Community Relations: Angela Batey

Haslam College of Business: Director of the Office of Diversity and Community Relations: Clarence Vaughn  
(heads staff of four).

College of Education Health and Human Services: Director of DEI: Dorion McCoy.

Tickle College of Engineering: Director of Engineering Diversity Programs: Travis Griffin (heads staff of three).

College of Law: Director of Diversity and Inclusion: Maria Saez-Tatman.

College of Social Work: Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion: J. Camille Hall.

Only Nursing and Veterinary Sciences have no dedicated DEI administrator (yet!).

Nine credits (three-three credit classes) are dedicated to DEI/CSJ in general education.

## University of Tennessee Health Science Center

DEI is coming to the sciences faster than most other places. Scientific disciplines are perceived to be bastions of meritocracy or white privilege. Thus medical schools and engineering schools have been targets at most universities. UT-HSC is no exception. Every college at UT-HSC has moved toward a DEI plan, either with a dedicated DEI administrator or a DEI committee or a DEI strategic plan. The university itself is moving toward adopting a campus wide DEI plan, as it has sown DEI into its strategic plan and has hired a DEI administrator with a significant staff and with a university-wide committee. The trends point toward a UTK-like break out in the next few years.

Key Document: Strategic Map with several goals overlapping with DEI. <sup>10</sup>

Associate Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity: Michael Alston (\$197,600). <sup>11</sup> 5 person staff.  
University-wide Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council. <sup>12</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Dentistry: Director of DEI: Syreeta T. McTavous. <sup>13</sup>

UTHSC Moving Forward Committee. <sup>14</sup>

College of Health Professionals: No designated diversity administrators.

Strategic Plan (2018-2015) has DEI hiring goals and culture building goals (1, 2, 3.7). <sup>15</sup>

College of Medicine: Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion: Claudette Shepherd.

Council on Diversity and Improvement.

Advancing Women in Medicine.

Committee on Admissions oversees extensive diversity scholarship program. <sup>16</sup>

College of Nursing: No designated diversity administrators.

Committee for Equity and Inclusion. <sup>17</sup>

College of Pharmacy: No designated diversity administrators.

Equity, Inclusivity, and Diversity Advisory Board. <sup>18</sup>

DEI sown into three strategic goals of College's plan, including a goal to "create an infrastructure that drives DEI." <sup>19</sup>

No general education requirements, strictly speaking.

Implicit bias training for search committees is optional, and it remains optional for all faculty as well.

## East Tennessee State University

ETSU has a Strategic Action Plan from its Office of Equity and Inclusion, a dedicated university-level administrator, and a Council to oversee its efforts at the university level. Hiring has begun at the college level, where its first Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion has been hired in the College of Arts and Sciences. Plans are hatching in other colleges. Like UT-HSC, ETSU is ready for a DEI break-out. It seems to be where UTK was in 2019.

Key Documents: Office of Equity and Inclusion, Strategic Action Plan 2020-2022.<sup>20</sup>  
Memo about Diversity and Equity.<sup>21</sup>

Vice President for Equity and Inclusion: Keith V. Johnson (\$160,425).<sup>22</sup>

University-wide committees include:

Equity & Inclusion Advisory Council.<sup>23</sup>

ETSU 125 Strategic Planning Task Force on Equity and Inclusion.<sup>24</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Arts and Sciences: Associate Dean for Equity & Inclusion: Daryl A. Carter.<sup>25</sup>

Equity & Inclusion Council.<sup>26</sup>

List of Core Values, not no strategic plan.<sup>27</sup>

College of Business and Technology: No designated diversity administrator.

Equity and Inclusion Committee.<sup>28</sup>

College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Services: No designated diversity administrator.

Clemmer College: Assist. Dean of Equity, Inclusion and Student Success: Jessie Wang.

Gatton College of Pharmacy: No designated diversity administrator. No committee detected

College of Nursing: No designated diversity administrator.

Committee for Equity and Inclusion.

DEI is part of the strategic plan, but subsidiary.<sup>29</sup>

Quilen College of Medicine: Director of DEI: Rachel Walden.

Diversity Council.<sup>30</sup>

No mention of DEI in strategic plan.

College of Public Health: No designated diversity administrator.

Committee for Equity and Inclusion.

Strategic Diversity Plan.<sup>31</sup>

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

No implicit bias training is offered.

# The University of Memphis

Recent controversies about woke grants at University of Memphis do not come as a surprise. Memphis has a Strategic Action Plan with DEI sown into it and a dedicated university-level DEI administrator. One should expect a more specific DEI plan in the coming years, with a great build-out at the university level. Colleges have begun the process of adopting DEI: six of its twelve colleges have either committees or strategic plans dedicated to DEI.

Key Documents: Strategic Plan: Leading Through Innovation, 2019-2023. <sup>32</sup> (DEI Highest Priority)

Vice President. . . and Director of Diversity Initiatives: Karen Weddle-West (\$302,656). <sup>33</sup>

University-wide committees include:

DEI Working Group (charged with the development of DEI Strategic Plan)

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Arts & Sciences: No designated diversity administrator. No committee detected.

College of Communication & Fine Arts: No designated diversity administrator.

DEI Committee

College of Education: Race, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (RDEI) Committee.

RDEI Action Plan Draft is prepared. <sup>34</sup>

College of Health Sciences: No designated diversity administrator. No committee detected.

College of Professional & Liberal Arts: No designated diversity administrator. No committee detected.

Fogelman College of Business & Economics: No designated diversity administrator.

DEI Committee

One of primary values is “accelerated equity.” <sup>35</sup>

Herff College of Engineering: No designated diversity administrator.

College level Strategic Plan includes DEI emphasis. <sup>36</sup>

Diversity Statements stating commitment at department level. <sup>37</sup>

Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality & Resort Management: None.

Loewenberg College of Nursing: No designated diversity administrator.

DEI Committee. <sup>38</sup>

Diversity a Core Value in Mission Statement. <sup>39</sup>

School of Communication Sciences and Disorders: Diversity Taskforce.

Taskforce Goals. <sup>40</sup>

School of Public Health: No designated diversity administrator.

Diversity is a core value and goal in Mission Statement. <sup>41</sup>

Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law: No designated diversity administrator.

A diversity emphasis in plan and mission. <sup>42</sup>

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

## Austin Peay State University

APSU has a Strategic Plan that emphasizes DEI and a dedicated university-level administrator, but that administrator has duties that compromise DEI leadership ability (since she is the Title IX Coordinator as well). Efforts at college level are developing but have broken out of the committee level in only three of the five colleges. Expect that APSU will start hiring a bigger staff at the university level before building out more infrastructure at the college level.

Key Documents: Strategic Plan 2016-2021: Diversity.<sup>43</sup>

Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator: LeNeeca R. Williams (\$119,000). Staff of three.  
University-wide committee: Diversity Committee.<sup>44</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Arts & Letters: No designated diversity administrator.

Diversity Committee

2020-2021 Diversity Task Force Report.<sup>45</sup>

College of Business: No designated diversity administrator.

DEI standing committee.

College of Behavioral and Health Sciences: No designated diversity administrator.

College Diversity Committee

Mission and Diversity Statement.<sup>46</sup>

College of Education: No designated diversity administrator.

College-level Diversity Council

Developing its first strategic diversity plan.<sup>47</sup>

College of STEM: No designated diversity administrator.

Diversity & Inclusion Committee with four subcommittees.

Diversity & Inclusion Statement with a pledge.<sup>48</sup>

Only Honor's students have dedicated DEI course (Honors 2220). No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

Implicit bias training is part of the required faculty and staff hiring process training that every member serving on a search committee receives.

## University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

UT-C has a Strategic Plan for DEI and a university-level administrator. Its efforts at the college level are less developed than most however, with only one of the four colleges seeming to emphasize DEI.

Key Documents: Diversity Plan.<sup>49</sup>

Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement: Stacy Lightfoot (\$195,000).<sup>50</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Arts and Science: DEI Committee.<sup>51</sup>

Diversity in strategic plan (goal 4).<sup>52</sup>

College of Engineering and Computer Science: No designated diversity administrators

College of Health, Education, and Profession Studies: No designated diversity administrators

Gary W. Rollins College of Business:

Chief Diversity Officer: Gail Dawson

Most courses in “Historical Understanding” subcategory (a three-credit requirement) are CSJ/DEI courses, as do most of those in the three-credit “Thoughts, Values and Beliefs” requirement.

Job search committees have an implicit bias training element in its hiring program.



## Tennessee Tech University

TTU has a university-level administrator but no university wide emphasis on DEI yet. Its colleges are leading the way, however, since many have plans and some have dedicated DEI administrators. Every college has a committee dedicated, in one way or another, to DEI. This is consistent with the trends nationwide, where the sciences hire more DEI administrators than the soft disciplines.

Key Documents: No University-wide Diversity Action Plan

Chief Diversity Officer: Rob Owens (\$128,000).<sup>53</sup>

University-wide committees include:

Commission on the Status of Blacks.

Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>54</sup>

Diversity, Equity, and Access Committee.

Office of Multicultural Affairs with two person staff.<sup>55</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

Every college has a committee dedicated, in one way or another, to DEI.

College of Agriculture and Human Ecology: No designated diversity administrator.

College and Arts & Science: Associate Dean for DEI: Ameilia Talley.<sup>56</sup>

College of Business: Director with Diversity and Inclusion portfolio: Cheryl Montgomery.<sup>57</sup>

College of Education: No designated diversity administrator.

College of Engineering: Director of Diversity, Recruitment & Student Success: Harry T. Ingle Jr.<sup>58</sup>

Computer science has diversity committee.

College of Fine Arts: No designated diversity administrator.

College of Graduate Studies: No designated diversity administrator.

Whitson-Hester School of Nursing: No designated diversity administrator.

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

No implicit bias training is currently available.

## Middle Tennessee State University

MTSU has some dedication to DEI at the administrative level, but very little at the college level. It is not clear that there is much DEI above a student center with a robust mission.

Key Documents: Office of Intercultural & Diversity Affairs mission statement and list of principles.<sup>59</sup>

Upper-Level Administrators Dedicated to DEI:

Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President of Faculty Affairs: Cheryl B. Torsney (\$162,500).

Special Assistant to the Provost: General Keith Huber (\$185,770).

Special Assistant to the President for Institutional Equity and Compliance: Christy Sigler (\$110,000).

Director, Intercultural & Diversity Affairs: Daniel Green.<sup>60</sup>

University Committees Dedicated to DEI.

Diversity Dissertation Fellowships.

Social Justice and Equality Initiative Task Force.

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Basic and Applied Sciences: No designated diversity administrators.

College of Behavioral and Health Sciences: No designated diversity administrators.

Jennings A. Jones College of Business: No designated diversity administrators.

Elements of Strategic Plan suggest the priority of diversity.<sup>61</sup>

College of Education: Sponsors Fairness, Justice and Equity Center led by Michelle Stevens.

College of Liberal Arts: No designated diversity administrators.

College of Media and Entertainment: No designated diversity administrators.

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements, though many courses are DEI focused throughout the general education.

## University of Tennessee at Martin

UT-Martin is just starting to get in the DEI game, it appears, with the search of a new Director of Equity and Diversity.

Key Documents:           None

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer: Mark McCloud (\$121,800)

Director of Equity and Diversity: Job search underway.<sup>62</sup>

University Committees Dedicated to DEI.

Inclusion Task Force.

Equity and Diversity Advisory Council.<sup>63</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges and Schools:

College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences: No designated diversity administrators.

College of Business and Global affairs: No designated diversity administrators.

    CBGA Advisory Board Workgroup II: Diverse Faculty Recruitment.

College of Education, Health and Behavioral Science: No designated diversity administrators.

College of Engineering and Natural Science: No designated diversity administrators.

College of Humanities and Fine Arts: No designated diversity administrators.

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

## Tennessee State University (HBCU)

TSU, Tennessee's only public HBCU, has a university-wide plan and a director of the Office of Equity and Inclusion, but TSU itself seems not to put much emphasis on DEI. This is in keeping with what one finds at other HBCUs.

Key Documents: Tennessee State University Access and Diversity Plan. <sup>64</sup>

Office of Equity and Inclusion, Director, Razel Jones. <sup>65</sup>

DEI Personnel in Colleges:

The College of Agriculture: DEI Committee.

The College of Business: No designated diversity administrators.

The College of Education: No designated diversity administrators.

The College of Health Sciences: No designated diversity administrators.

The College of Liberal Arts: No designated diversity administrators.

Some departments like the Department of Communications has a Diversity Plan.

The College of Life and Physical Sciences: No designated diversity administrators.

The College of Public Service and Urban Affairs: No designated diversity administrators.

No dedicated diversity classes are in the general education requirements.

Implicit bias training highly recommended for search committees, but not required.

## University of Tennessee Southern

Just having been established, UT-S has very little emphasis on DEI, though it is interesting and important that from the get-go it built DEI features and personnel into its operations in curriculum and administration.

Key Documents:       None.

Chief Diversity Officer: Sarah Catherine Richardson (\$52,000)

DEI Personnel in Colleges: No designated administrators or committees detected in any of the six colleges and schools.

Jonnston School of Business

Grissom School of Education

Martin School of Arts & Humanities

School of Mathematics & Science

Travis School of Nursing & Health Sciences

School of Social Sciences

1 credit First Year Experience general education requirements.

# CONCLUSION

DEI is nearly fully grown at UTK, but it is growing through Tennessee higher education. No one person is responsible for this trend. No one person can stop it.

Those pushing this ideology hope to change Tennessee's culture and its values. But this DEI mission does not advance the common good or the cause of knowledge.

Instead, it is inimical to both. It undermines the common good by compromising the rule of equal laws and the idea of individuals having rights as individuals instead of having claims as members of groups. It tends to alienate many citizens — including the most productive — from their country. It undermines the advancement of knowledge by taking certain questions off the table and by reflecting a false understanding of human beings stuck with their group identity.

Reform is unlikely to happen from within. Only the Tennessee's legislature can leverage change in Tennessee higher education. This is going to require a concerted and persistent effort.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



### ARTHUR MILIKH

Arthur Milikh is the executive director of The Claremont Institute's Center for the American Way of Life. His work focuses on the tradition of American political thought and the freedom of speech. Previously, he was the Associate Director of the Center for American Studies and AWC Family Foundation Fellow at The Heritage Foundation. Prior to Heritage, he worked at the House Committee on Armed Services and at The Hudson Institute. Milikh's writings have appeared in The Claremont Review of Books, National Affairs, City Journal, Real Clear Politics, Law & Liberty, and American Greatness. Milikh holds a B.A. from Emory University, a Masters from the University of Chicago, and is a Ph.D. candidate at The Catholic University of America.



### ANNA MILLER

Anna is the Education Policy Director at Idaho Freedom Foundation. She is an alumni of the MA Fellowship at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. She lives in Boise, Idaho with her husband, Brock. Anna earned her M.A. in Economics from George Mason University (2020) and a B.A. in Philosophy, Religion, and Ancient Greek and Roman Studies as a division one student athlete from Furman University (2017). Anna's work has been published in the Wall Street Journal, The Hill, The Detroit News, The Washington Examiner, and The Daily Caller among others.



### SUSAN KAESTNER

Susan is the founding director of Velocity Convergence which supports viewpoint and ideological diversity in public institutions. For almost 20 years she has been the president of the Tennessee Forum - an issue advocacy organization that has worked both inside the state legislature and in the public square to promote conservative ideals. Her policy and advocacy work includes: expanding school choice opportunities, collective bargaining reform, ethics reform, transparency issues related to the Tennessee School Board Association, as well as judicial retention elections. A proud Tennessean for more than 50 years, she lives on a small farm in Middle Tennessee.

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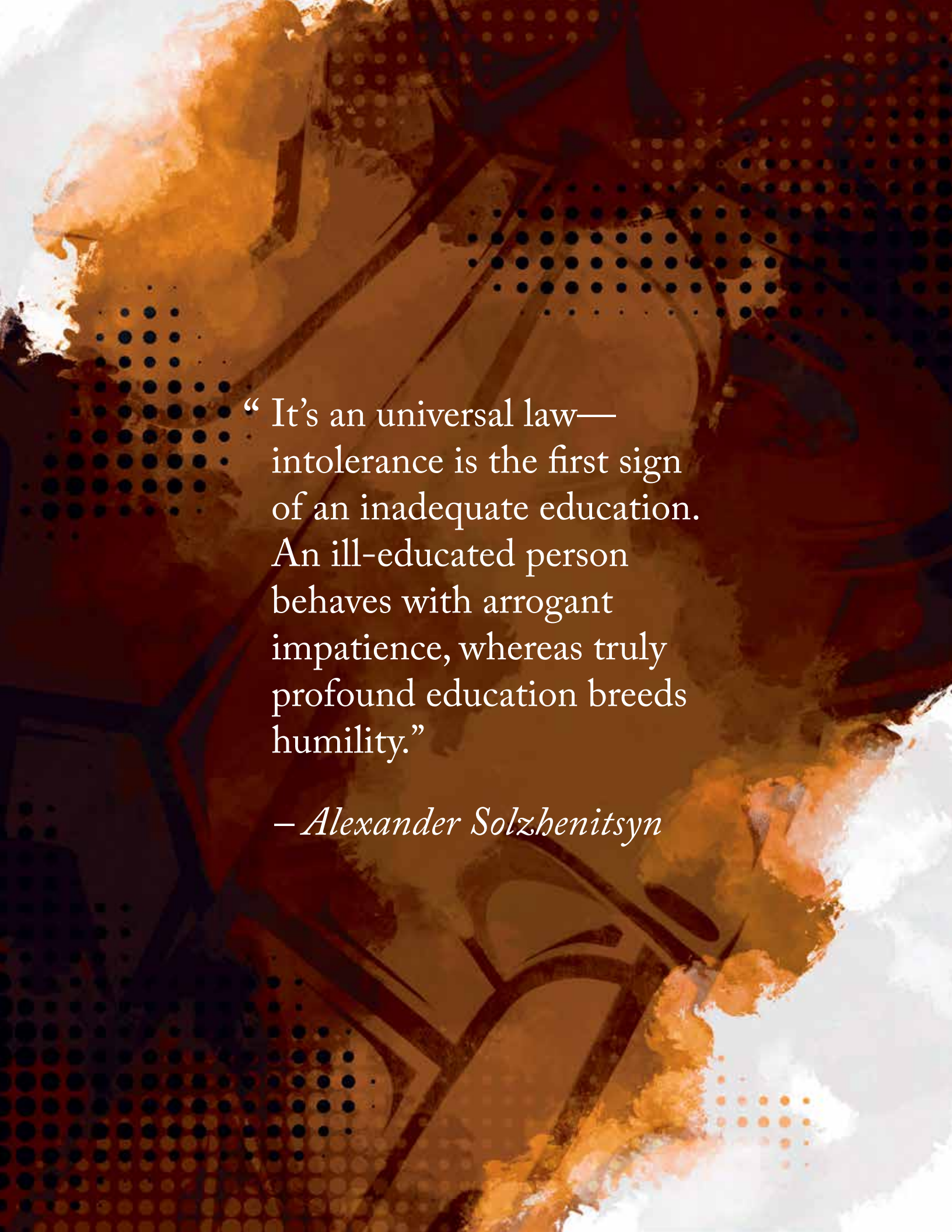
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The background is an abstract composition of various elements. It features a grid of small, dark circular dots on a reddish-brown background. Overlaid on this are large, irregular shapes in shades of orange, yellow, and white, which appear to be layered or painted. The overall effect is a complex, textured visual field.

“ It’s an universal law—  
intolerance is the first sign  
of an inadequate education.  
An ill-educated person  
behaves with arrogant  
impatience, whereas truly  
profound education breeds  
humility.”

– *Alexander Solzhenitsyn*



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